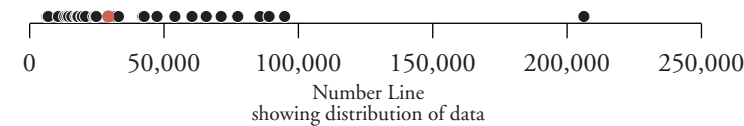


The Socioeconomic Indicators



Total Population

Population size is one of the most important influences on the character of human activities in a place, and a key influence on resource use. People bring labor, knowledge, and economic activity to a place. At the same time, they generate demand for natural resources, goods and services ranging from food to recreational opportunities. Within the Blue Ridge Parkway region, county population (2000) ranges from 6,299 (Bedford City) to 206,330 (Buncombe).¹

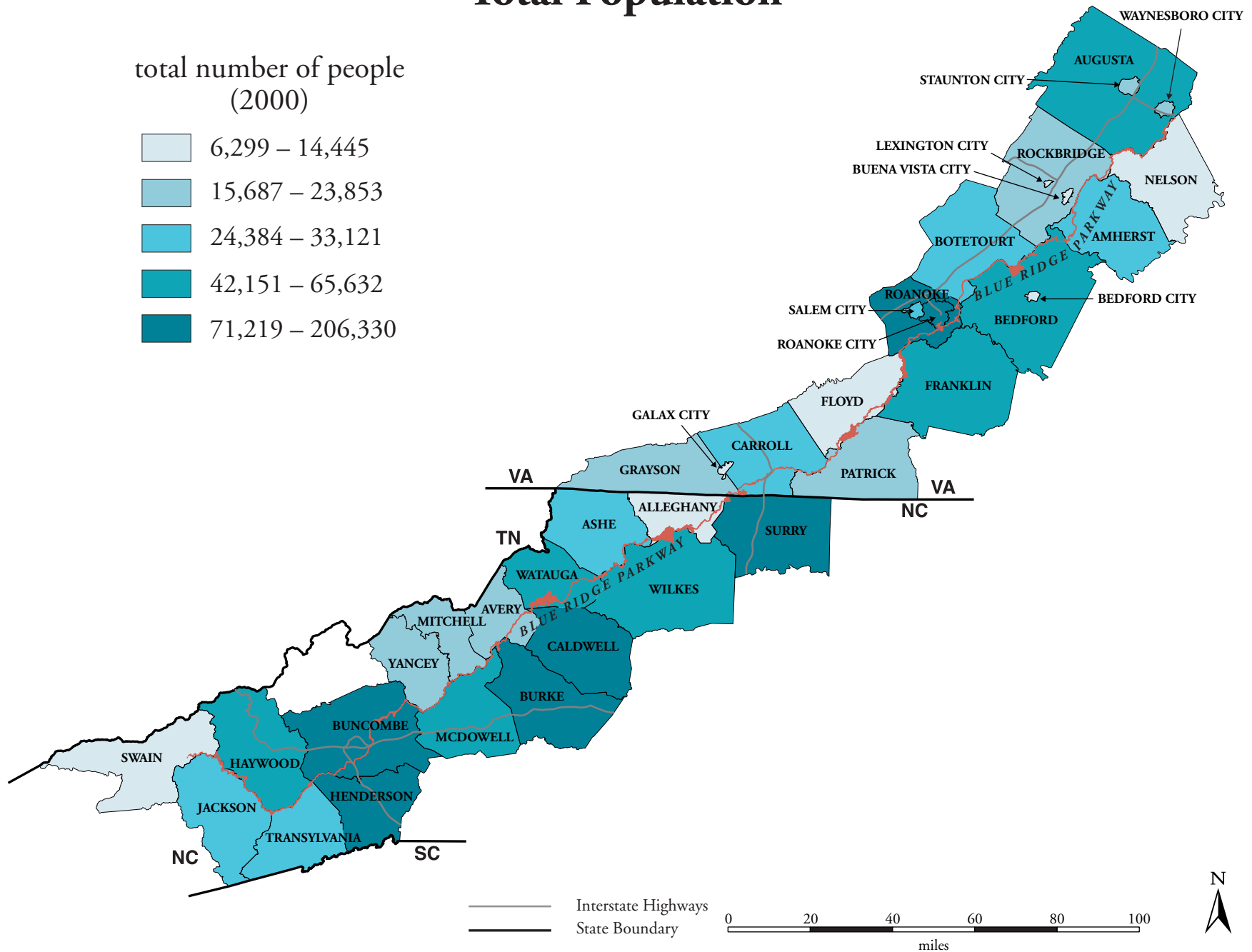
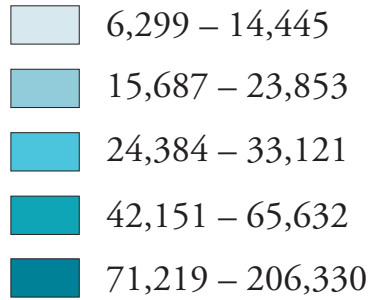


NOTES

total number of people (2000)			
Alleghany	10,677	Haywood	54,033
Swain	12,968	Bedford	60,371
Floyd	13,874	Augusta	65,615
Nelson	14,445	Wilkes	65,632
Mitchell	15,687	Surry	71,219
Avery	17,167	Caldwell	77,415
Yancey	17,774	Roanoke	85,778
Grayson	17,917	Burke	89,148
Patrick	19,407	Henderson	89,173
Rockbridge	20,808	Buncombe	206,330
Ashe	24,384	Bedford City	6,299
Carroll	29,245	Buena Vista City	6,349
Transylvania	29,334	Galax City	6,837
Botetourt	30,496	Lexington City	6,867
Amherst	31,894	Waynesboro City	19,520
Jackson	33,121	Staunton City	23,853
McDowell	42,151	Salem City	24,747
Watauga	42,695	Roanoke City	94,911
Franklin	47,286		

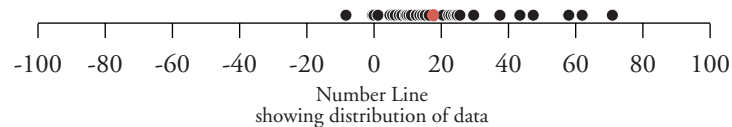
Total Population

total number of people
(2000)



Historical Population Change

Population change is due to birth, deaths, and migration. Trends in historical population change (1970-1990) provide a context from which to view recent population change (1990-2000). The direction and rate of population change are important socioeconomic trends. For example, population growth increases the size of the economy and can generate changes in land use that affect natural ecosystems. Within the Blue Ridge Parkway region, county growth rates (1970-1990) ranged from a decrease of 8.4% (Lexington City) to an increase of 70.8% (Bedford).



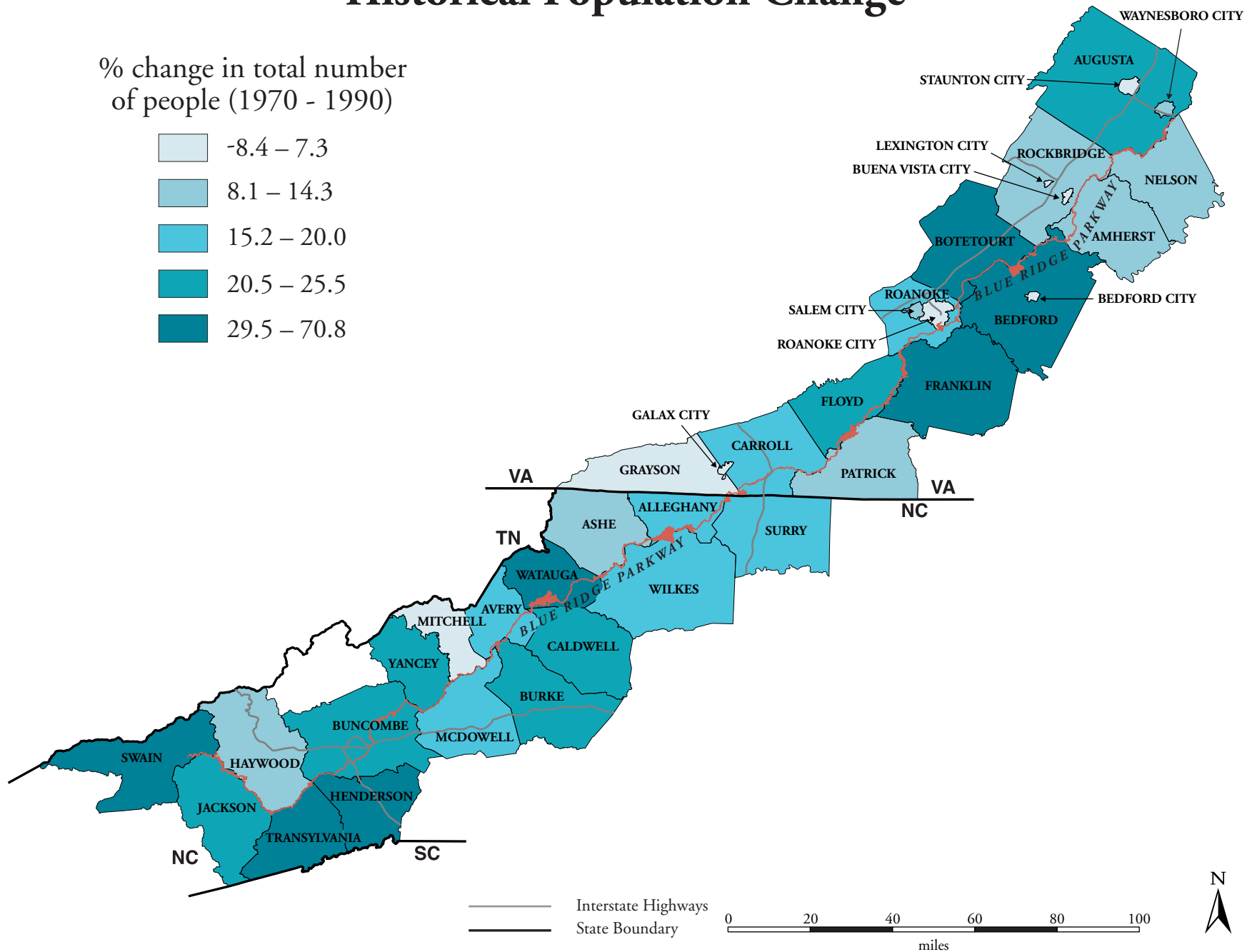
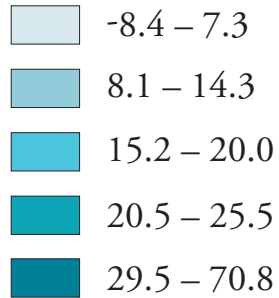
NOTES

% change in total number of people (1970 - 1990)

Grayson	5.4	Jackson	24.3
Mitchell	7.3	Caldwell	24.7
Nelson	9.2	Burke	25.5
Amherst	9.6	Transylvania	29.5
Rockbridge	10.3	Botetourt	37.4
Haywood	12.5	Swain	43.3
Ashe	13.5	Franklin	47.3
Patrick	14.3	Watauga	57.9
Carroll	15.2	Henderson	61.9
McDowell	16.4	Bedford	70.8
Avery	17.5	Lexington City	-8.4
Roanoke	17.8	Buena Vista City	-0.3
Alleghany	17.9	Staunton City	-0.2
Wilkes	19.9	Bedford City	1.0
Surry	20.0	Roanoke City	4.6
Buncombe	20.5	Galax City	6.2
Yancey	22.1	Salem City	8.1
Floyd	22.8	Waynesboro City	11.0
Augusta	23.6		

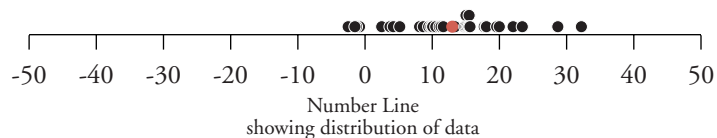
Historical Population Change

% change in total number
of people (1970 - 1990)



Recent Population Change

Measuring recent population change provides an indication of the extent to which population change is influencing current local or regional priorities. For example, population growth changes the tax base, adds new voters, and can increase demand for services ranging from schools to transportation to outdoor recreation. Within the Blue Ridge Parkway region, the recent change in county population (1990-2000) ranges from a decrease of 2.5% (Staunton City) to an increase of 32.2% (Bedford).



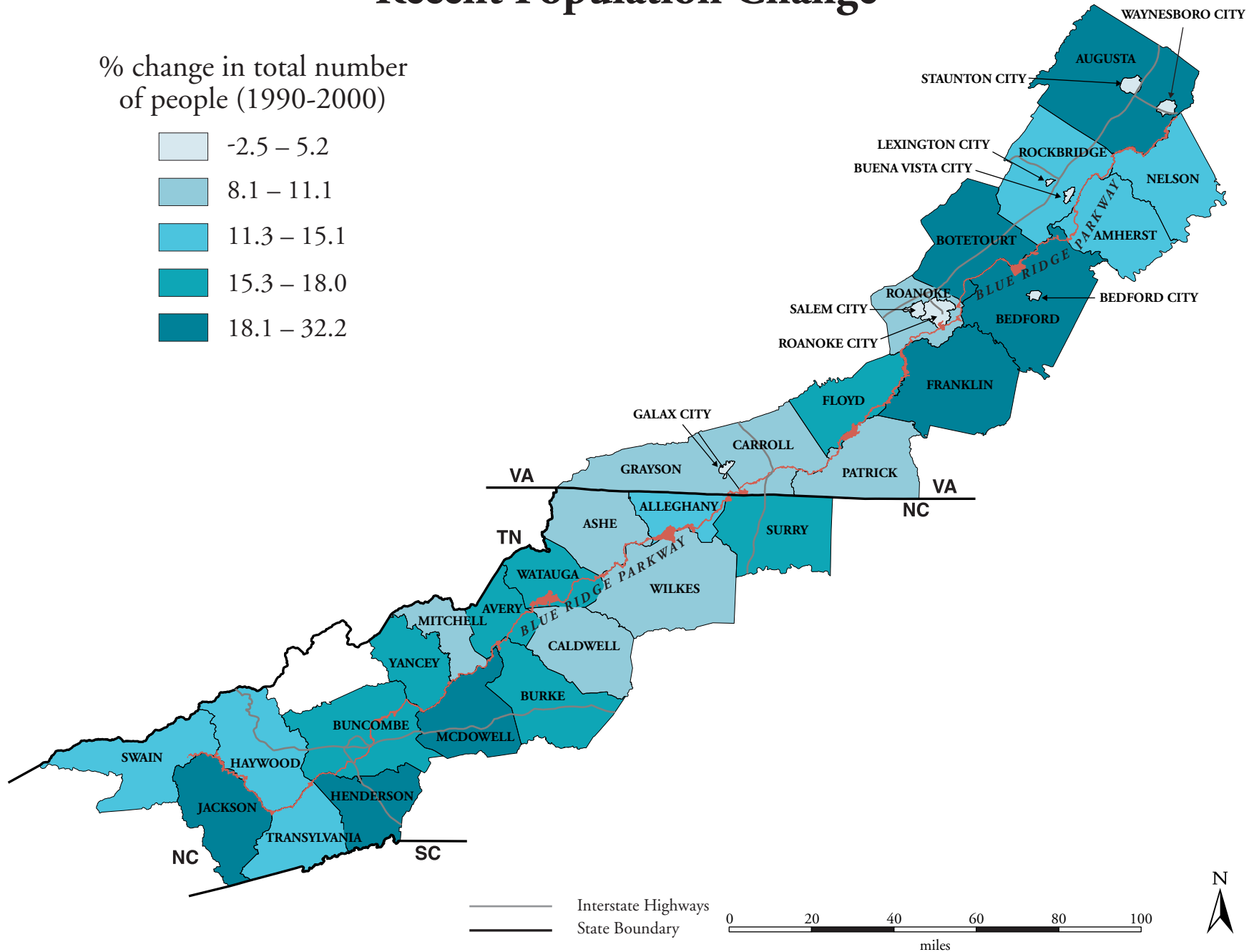
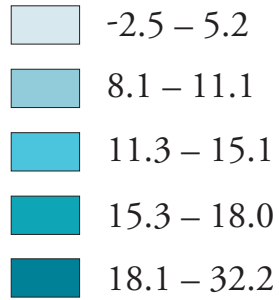
NOTES

% change in total number of people (1990-2000)

Roanoke	8.1	Floyd	15.6
Mitchell	8.7	Burke	17.7
Caldwell	9.5	Buncombe	18.0
Ashe	9.8	McDowell	18.1
Carroll	10.0	Franklin	19.6
Grayson	10.1	Augusta	20.0
Wilkes	10.5	Botetourt	22.0
Patrick	11.1	Jackson	23.4
Alleghany	11.3	Henderson	28.7
Amherst	11.6	Bedford	32.2
Nelson	13.0	Staunton City	-2.5
Rockbridge	13.4	Roanoke City	-1.5
Transylvania	14.9	Lexington City	-1.3
Swain	15.1	Buena Vista City	-0.9
Haywood	15.1	Galax City	2.5
Yancey	15.3	Bedford City	3.7
Surry	15.4	Salem City	4.2
Avery	15.5	Waynesboro City	5.2
Watauga	15.5		

Recent Population Change

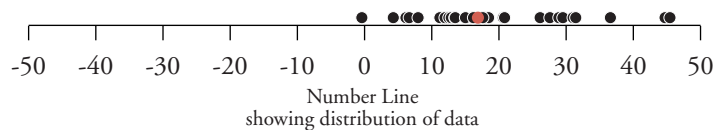
% change in total number
of people (1990-2000)



Projected Population Change

Population projections can be made with some accuracy for short and mid-range time spans. Projections can help planners anticipate potential impacts on park resources. For example, population growth can generate changes in land use and transportation, growth of new and existing communities, and increases in the demand for park experiences. Within the Blue Ridge Parkway region, the projected change in county population by the year 2020 ranges from a decrease of 0.4 % (Roanoke City) to an increase of 45.4% (Bedford)².

Data for the independent cities of Virginia, except Roanoke City, are not individually reported in this data set. The data for independent cities are combined with data for the counties which enclose them.



NOTES

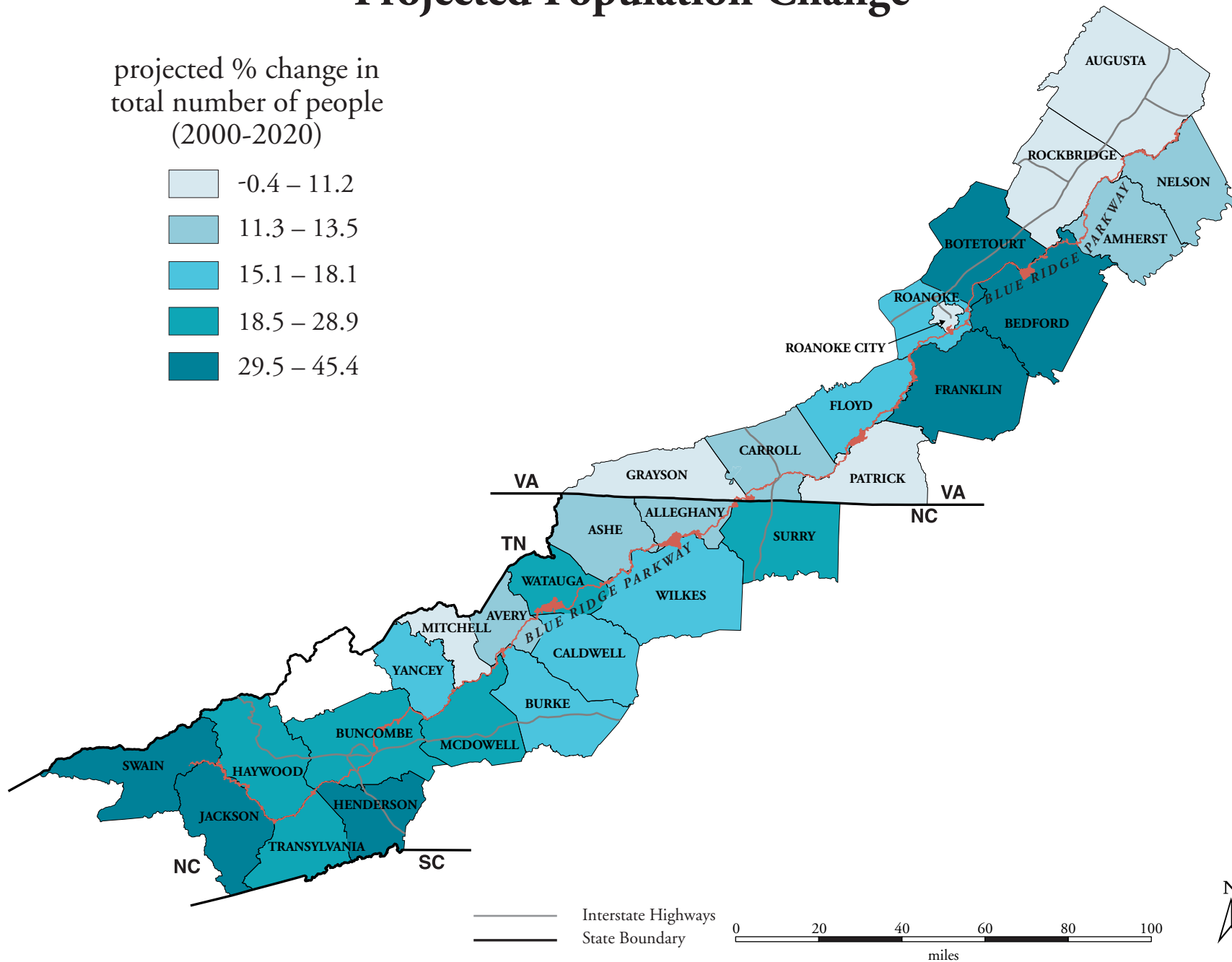
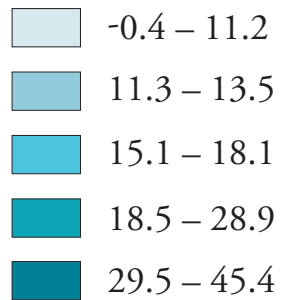
projected % change in
total number of people
(2000-2020)

Roanoke City	-0.4	Floyd	17.6
Grayson	4.3	Wilkes	18.1
Patrick	6.2	McDowell	18.5
Mitchell	6.7	Surry	20.6
Rockbridge	8.0	Haywood	20.8
Augusta	11.2	Watauga	26.1
Carroll	11.3	Transylvania	27.6
Nelson	12.0	Buncombe	28.9
Amherst	12.5	Henderson	29.5
Avery	12.9	Botetourt	31.0
Alleghany	13.4	Franklin	31.4
Ashe	13.5	Swain	36.6
Burke	15.1	Jackson	44.7
Caldwell	16.1	Bedford	45.4
Roanoke	16.2		
Yancey	17.5		

← 16.9

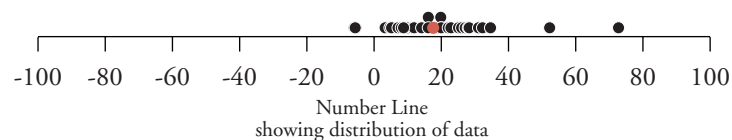
Projected Population Change

projected % change in
total number of people
(2000-2020)



Population Density Change

Population density change is an alternate means of stating the rate of population growth or decline. Population density change depicted here over a mid-range period of time (1980-2000) can be compared with recent population change (1990-2000), as depicted on pages 16 - 17, to determine whether the rate of change has remained steady, decreased, or increased in recent years. Steady or decelerating population growth can allow government and institutions to anticipate and plan for needs in advance. Accelerating population growth can place stress on government and institutions, which must respond rapidly to changes in civic life, industry, infrastructure, and the use of land and resources. Within the Blue Ridge Parkway region, the change in county population density (1980-2000) ranges from a decrease of 5.8% (Lexington City) to an increase of 72.8% (Bedford).³



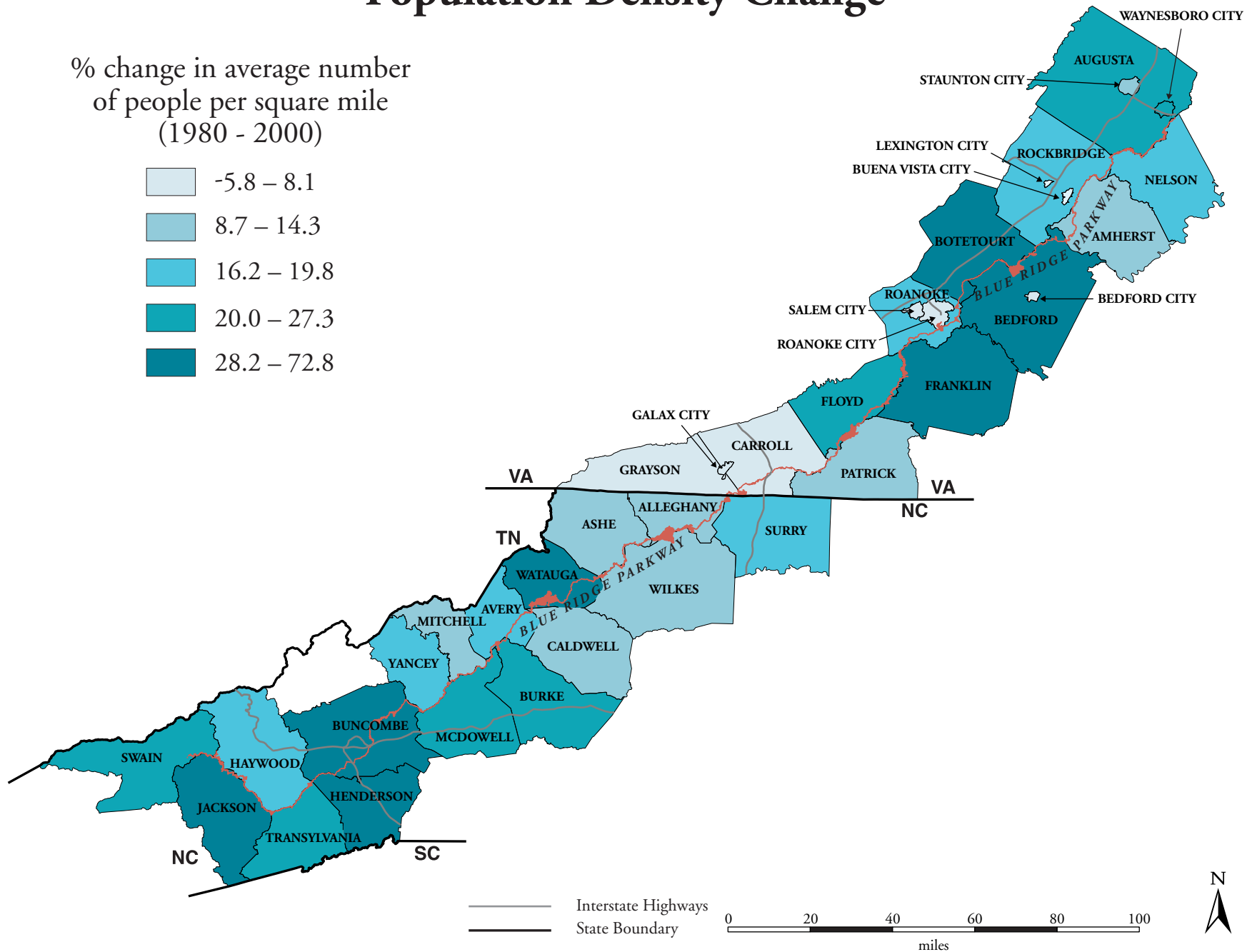
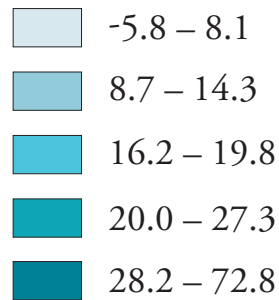
NOTES

% change in average number
of people per square mile
(1980-2000)

Carroll	7.2	Burke	23.0
Grayson	8.1	Transylvania	25.3
Mitchell	8.7	Swain	26.1
Ashe	9.2	Buncombe	28.2
Amherst	9.5	Jackson	28.3
Patrick	10.0	Botetourt	31.1
Alleghany	11.4	Franklin	32.3
Wilkes	11.9	Watauga	34.8
Caldwell	14.3	Henderson	52.2
Rockbridge	16.2	Bedford	72.8
Haywood	16.2	Lexington City	-5.8
Roanoke	17.6	Buena Vista City	-5.5
Nelson	18.4	Roanoke City	-5.3
Yancey	19.0	Salem City	3.3
Avery	19.1	Galax City	4.8
Surry	19.8	Bedford City	5.1
McDowell	20.0	Staunton City	9.1
Floyd	20.0	Waynesboro City	27.3
Augusta	22.1		

Population Density Change

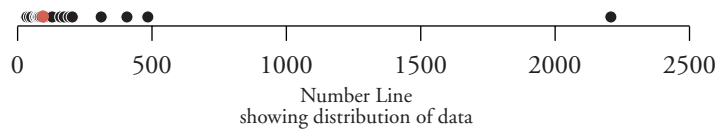
% change in average number
of people per square mile
(1980 - 2000)



Projected Population Density

Population density projections are based on population projections. Future regional variations in county population density suggest variations in how counties will approach decisions about natural resource-related issues such as transportation, zoning, and water supply. Significantly increased population density can generate rising land costs as well as increased demand for open space to be used for recreation or conservation. Within the Blue Ridge Parkway region, projected county population density for the year 2020 ranges from 33.5 people per square mile (Swain) to 2206.3 people per square mile (Roanoke City).

Data for the independent cities of Virginia, except Roanoke City, are not individually reported in this data set. The data for independent cities are combined with data for the counties which enclose them.⁴



NOTES

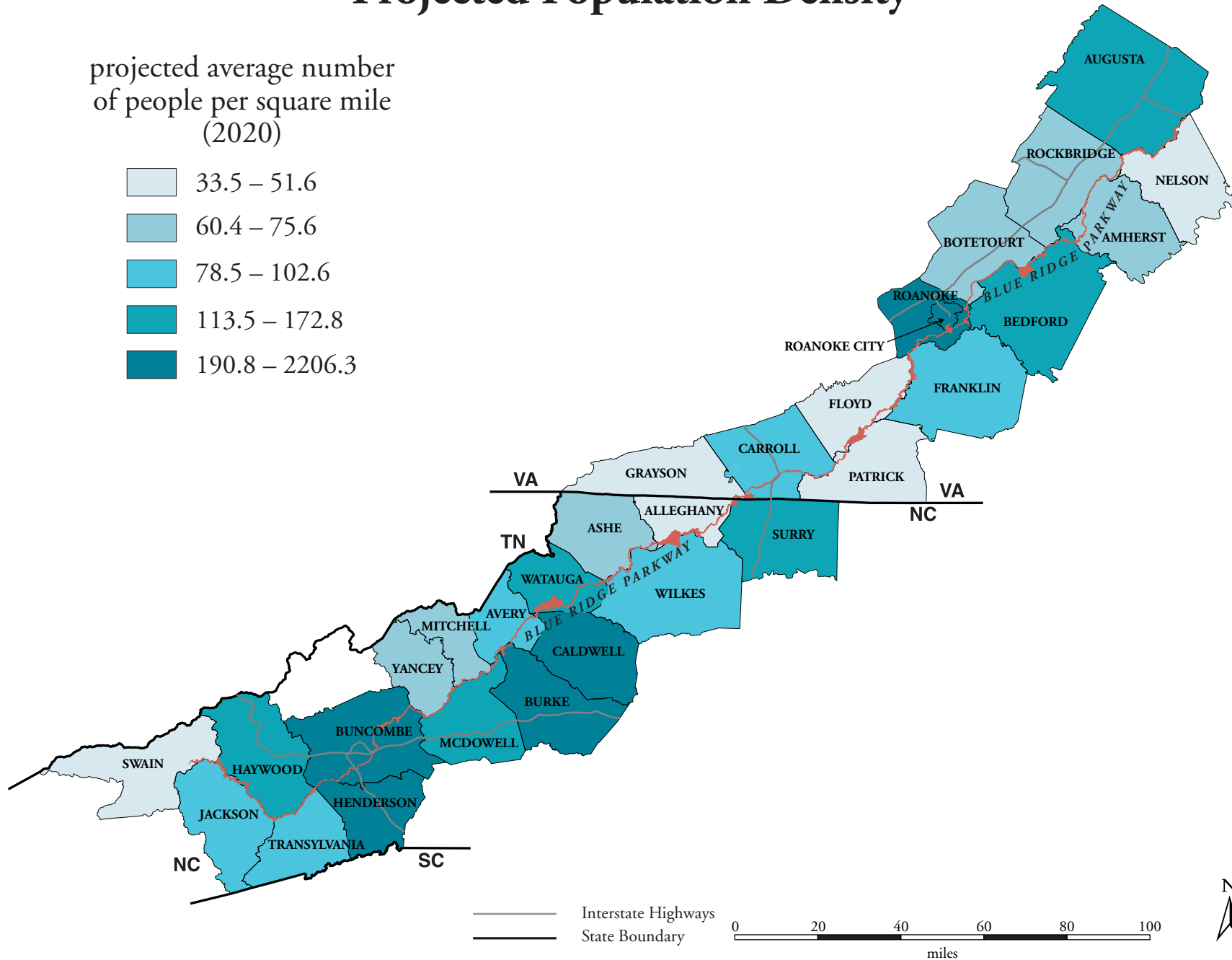
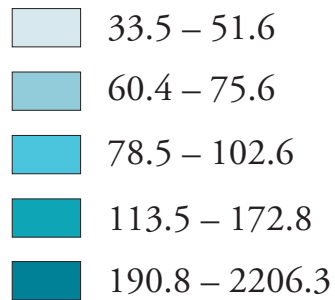
projected average number
of people per square mile
(2020)

Swain	33.5	Transylvania	99.2
Nelson	34.3	Wilkes	102.6
Grayson	42.3	McDowell	113.5
Patrick	42.7	Haywood	118.2
Floyd	42.8	Augusta	121.0
Alleghany	51.6	Bedford	128.1
Rockbridge	60.4	Surry	160.5
Ashe	64.9	Watauga	172.8
Yancey	66.8	Caldwell	190.8
Botetourt	74.0	Burke	203.1
Mitchell	75.5	Henderson	310.2
Amherst	75.6	Buncombe	406.6
Avery	78.5	Roanoke	485.5
Carroll	83.0	Roanoke City	2206.3
Franklin	90.1		
Jackson	98.1		

← 94.1

Projected Population Density

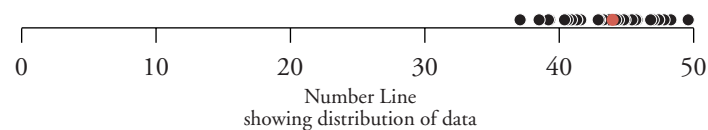
projected average number
of people per square mile
(2020)



Projected Median Age

Median age expresses the age of a “typical” county resident for whom half the population is older and half is younger. Just as age is an important influence on individual behavior, the median age of a county’s population can influence its character in many ways. For example, a relatively young county population might place a higher priority on schools, while a relatively old county population might place a higher priority on health care. Within the Blue Ridge Parkway region, projections for median age in the year 2020 range from 37.1 (Burke) to 49.6 (Transylvania).

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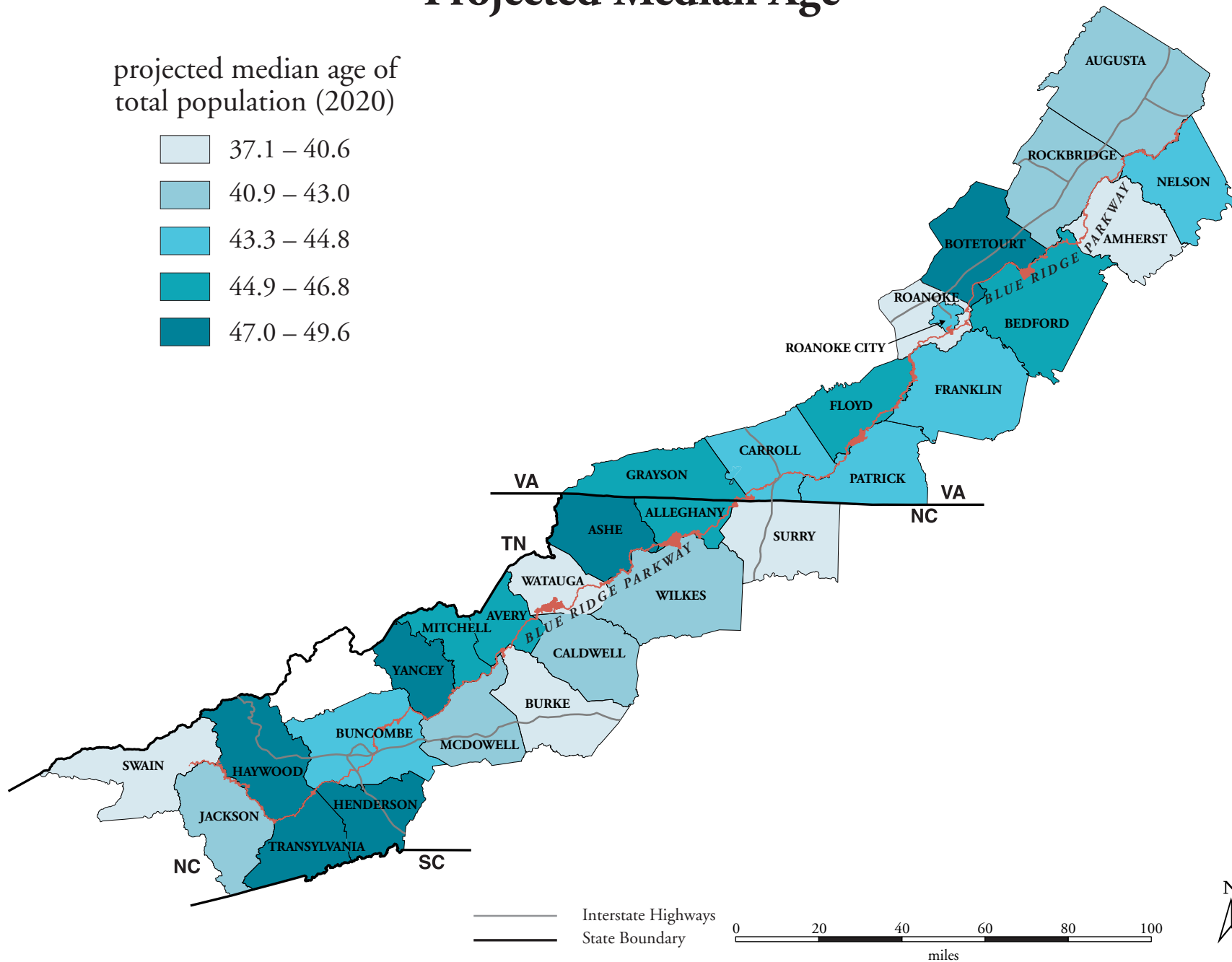
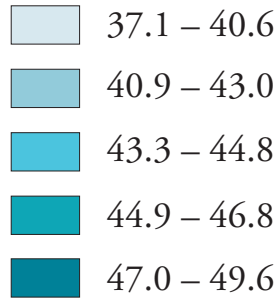
NOTES

projected median age of total population (2020)

Burke	37.1	Franklin	44.8
Surry	38.5	Bedford	44.9
Roanoke	39.2	Mitchell	45.4
Swain	39.3	Avery	45.7
Amherst	40.4	Alleghany	45.7
Watauga	40.6	Floyd	45.8
Wilkes	40.9	Grayson	46.8
Jackson	41.3	Yancey	47.0
Rockbridge	41.3	Henderson	47.4
Caldwell	41.6	Haywood	47.4
McDowell	42.9	Botetourt	47.8
Augusta	43.0	Ashe	48.3
Carroll	43.3	Transylvania	49.6
Buncombe	43.8	Roanoke City	43.7
Nelson	44.2		44.0
Patrick	44.4		

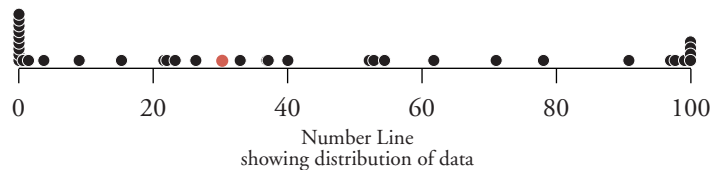
Projected Median Age

projected median age of
total population (2020)



Urban Population

The relative percentage of urban dwellers within counties in the park region can be significant in addressing regional issues related to park management. Urban dwellers may have easier access to schools, stores, and medical service. They may also benefit from a greater array of public services such as water utilities and municipal police protection. These and many other differences can tend to generate varying urban and rural strategies for dealing with issues such as taxation, development, and environmental protection. Within the Blue Ridge Parkway region, the percentage of the county population living in urban areas (2000) ranges from 0% (Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Floyd, Mitchell, Nelson, Patrick, Swain, Yancey) to 100% (Bedford City).⁵



NOTES

% total population living in urban areas (2000)			
Alleghany	0.0	Botetourt	32.9
Ashe	0.0	Amherst	36.9
Avery	0.0	Transylvania	37.1
Mitchell	0.0	Watauga	40.0
Swain	0.0	Haywood	52.1
Yancey	0.0	Henderson	52.8
Floyd	0.0	Burke	54.4
Nelson	0.0	Caldwell	61.7
Patrick	0.0	Buncombe	71.0
Grayson	0.6	Roanoke	78.0
Carroll	1.4	Galax City	90.7
Rockbridge	3.7	Buena Vista City	97.0
Franklin	9.0	Waynesboro City	97.7
Bedford	15.3	Staunton City	99.1
Jackson	21.6	Lexington City	100.0
Augusta	22.0	Roanoke City	100.0
McDowell	23.3	Salem City	100.0
Wilkes	26.3	Bedford City	100.0
Surry	30.2		

Urban Population

% total population living
in urban areas (2000)

